

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 COLOMBO 001547

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS, S/CT, KATRINA TASK FORCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/01/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [EFIN](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT URGES EU TERRORIST  
DESIGNATION FOR LTTE, INVITES UN ENVOY

REF: A. COLOMBO 1537 (NOTAL)

[B](#). COLOMBO 1493 (NOTAL)

[C](#). COLOMBO 1453 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CHARGE' D'AFFAIRES JAMES F. ENTWISTLE. REASON: 1.4 (B,  
D)

-----  
SUMMARY  
-----

[1](#). (C) In a September 2 meeting, Foreign Secretary H.M.G.S. Palihakkara briefed Charge' on the status of Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) efforts to persuade the European Union to proscribe the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a terrorist organization and to review possible funding flows from EU nations to the LTTE (Refs B and C). Palihakkara said the GSL hopes recent evidence of LTTE responsibility for the August 12 assassination of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, communicated to the UK High Commissioner September 1, will convince EU members to designate the Tigers at a meeting on the topic scheduled for September 7 in Brussels. Palihakkara underscored that the upcoming visit to Colombo of a UN official was aimed at helping the GSL review ways to strengthen the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA)--and was not meant as an indirect expression of GSL displeasure with Norwegian facilitation efforts. Charge' thanked the Foreign Secretary for the Sri Lankan offer of assistance to the

SIPDIS

victims of Hurricane Katrina. End summary.

-----  
GSL SEEKING EU CONSENSUS  
-----

[2](#). (C) In a September 2 meeting, Foreign Secretary H.M.G.S. Palihakkara updated Charge' on Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) efforts to persuade the European Union to list the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a terrorist organization. Palihakkara provided Charge' with a copy of an Aide Memoire given to the UK High Commissioner on August 29 formally requesting the inclusion of the Tigers on the EU List of Persons, Groups and Entities involved in Terrorist Acts. The note states that although "the Government of Sri Lanka has long believed that the terrorist acts engaged in by the LTTE fully merit its inclusion in the EU List," the GSL had desisted from urging EU action following the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement with the LTTE in 2002 "until the heinous murder of the late Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka on 12th August, 2005." Palihakkara acknowledged that the August 29 note offered only circumstantial evidence of LTTE responsibility for the assassination, e.g., previous unsuccessful LTTE attempts on Kadirgamar's life; the arrest of two LTTE cadres in the vicinity of Kadirgamar's residence on July 30; previous LTTE assassinations by sniper and other Tiger-trademark similarities to the crime; and the "ghoulish," gloating reaction to the killing in media sympathetic to the LTTE. The aide memoire also contains several annexes of supplemental information on the history of LTTE terrorist activities over the past 30 years.

[3](#). (C) On September 1, Palihakkara reported, he had provided the UK High Commissioner an addendum to the August 29 note (a copy of which Palihakkara handed to Charge') containing what the GSL believes is more conclusive evidence of LTTE guilt: confessions obtained by police from two Tamil men, one of whom was employed as a gardener at the next-door residence from which the assassin's bullets were fired, implicating the LTTE in the crime. According to the gardener's statement, in February 2004 he was introduced to three LTTE cadres in Colombo who demanded his "help" and brought him to LTTE headquarters in Kilinochchi in May 2005, where he met "Charles," the LTTE intelligence chief in charge of operations in the south. Following that visit, the gardener returned to Colombo, where he assisted "Vinothan," an LTTE cadre, to perform surveillance on the late Minister's house, obtain a key to the adjacent house and bring in materials to construct the improvised tripod used to mount the murder weapon. At "Vinothan's" insistence, the statement continues, the gardener also let two unidentified Tamil men into the

house the night of August 10.

14. (C) Even Norwegian facilitators are saying in private that they are convinced of the Tigers' guilt, the Foreign Secretary commented. Palihakkara said the GSL hopes that

SIPDIS

this stronger evidence of LTTE culpability in Kadirgamar's killing would succeed in convincing EU member nations to designate the Tigers. He reported that a meeting of member states' representatives "at the functional level" will address this topic in Brussels on September 7. The GSL is buttressing its effort with demarches in several European capitals as well, he noted. He expressed gratitude to Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca for raising the issue in her recent meetings in London, and for US discussions with Canada. Sri Lankan Ambassador to U.S. Bernard Goonetilleke will follow up by traveling to Ottawa as a special envoy to press the case, Palihakkara said. Charge' noted that the Indian High Commissioner had told him that her government would also "lobby" UK Prime Minister Blair to designate the Tigers at an upcoming Indian-EU summit.

-----  
TRO TOO?  
-----

15. (C) In the same meeting, MFA Legal Advisor Rohan Perera reported that ongoing GSL efforts to track the flow of foreign funds through the LTTE-affiliated Tamil Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) revealed that USD 9 million had been funneled through the charity from abroad since January. The GSL is trying to obtain a country-by-country breakdown on the funding, as well as additional information on individual contributors, Perera noted, adding that a significant amount of money appears to have been come from South Africa through Australia to TRO coffers. The LTTE is adept at hiding money, Perera observed; funds that were supposed to have been frozen in the UK after the British Charity Commission de-listed the TRO as a charitable organization August 10 have nonetheless been successfully transferred to White Pigeon, another LTTE front. Because it does not wish to impede ongoing post-tsunami reconstruction and humanitarian aid in LTTE-affected areas, the GSL is not moving to proscribe the TRO itself, Palihakkara interjected. The GSL accepts TRO as an organization in Sri Lanka, but does not accept that the TRO has the right to raise funds abroad for its activities, he clarified. The GSL is thus counting on "our friends" to take a hard look at funding sources, the Foreign Secretary concluded.

-----  
NO HIDDEN MESSAGE IN UN SPECIAL ENVOY VISIT  
-----

16. (C) Raising the upcoming visit to Sri Lanka of UN official Lakhdar Brahimi (Ref A), Charge' asked if a trip to LTTE headquarters in Kilinochchi was scheduled for the visitor. Palihakkara replied that Brahimi is coming as a special envoy from UN Secretary General Annan to "review the operation of the Ceasefire Agreement"; the human rights situation, especially with respect to child soldiers recruited by the LTTE; and to determine "what can the UN do" to bolster the peace process. The UN does not envision a role as facilitator, Palihakkara stressed. (Comment: The Norwegians suspect that Brahimi's visit, following so closely on recent anti-Norwegian comments from newly appointed Foreign Minister Anura Bandaranaike, is meant to convey GSL dissatisfaction at Oslo's facilitation efforts. End comment.)

-----  
GSL RESPONSE TO KATRINA  
-----

17. (SBU) Charge' expressed U.S. gratitude for the condolences offered by President Chandrika Kumaratunga in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and for the GSL's pledge of USD 25,000 to the American Red Cross. Palihakkara replied that although the GSL was able to give only a "token" amount of aid, the Sri Lankan government and people "had to do something" to show their appreciation of U.S. generosity after the tsunami. He added that the GSL also plans to send a consignment of "one or two tons" of instant tea as emergency relief; details of the shipment will be provided next week.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

18. (C) The GSL, as Palihakkara has noted to us previously, continues to be in the unenviable "dilemma" of urging other countries to slap a terrorist designation on an organization that the GSL itself, in the interests of furthering the peace process, has not proscribed. The GSL is in an obvious bind: it can neither abandon the peace process by designating the

Tigers itself nor appear "too soft" by not coming down hard on the Tigers. Designations by the EU and Canada would send an unmistakable message from the international community condemning continued LTTE terrorism.  
ENTWISTLE